

The Oldis-Brinckerhoff House
Southwest cor. Maywood and Central Avenues
Maywood, Bergen County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-697

HABS
NJ
2-MAYWO
3-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

HABS
NJ
2-MAYWO
3-

The Oldis-Brinckerhoff House
Southwest cor. Maywood and Central Avenue
Maywood, Bergen County, New Jersey

Owner and Occupant: Dr. Gertrude Bilhuber

Date of Erection: 1820-1825; alterations about 1870 and
1897

Architect: Unknown

Builder: John D. Romeyn for daughter Margaret Oldis

Present Condition: Original as altered*, very well main-
tained

Number of Storeys: One and a half, over cellar

Materials of Construction:

Foundation - local brown sandstone

Exterior walls - coursed ashlar front and ends, coursed
rubble rear; all brown sandstone to
eave line and frame gable ends (modern
clapboarded) above it

Interior walls - stone partywall and frame partitions

Chimneys - brick, built into inside of gable end walls

Roof - gambrel on main house; gable on wing. New sawed
rafters replaced original hand hewn rafters when
main garret was partitioned, about 1870-1897.
Cornices not original.

Flooring - parquet and other modern over original wood
planks

Mantels - one original remaining, others 1870 and 1897

Historical Data:

The name of the original builder and owner of this so-
called "Brinkerhoff Homestead" as stated above is discovered
by search of the title to the property in the County records,

* Rear stone wall of wing removed and frame annex made there
to connect an out kitchen at time of raising roof of wing
for improved headroom for finished second story. Dormer
windows and front porch 1870-1897.

reported as follows:

By his will of 31 March 1825, proved 28 September 1831, Daniel Romine (a) of New Barbadoes Township, Bergen County, devised to his wife Margaret during her widowhood all his estate, real and personal. To his son John Romine he devised "All my farm tract of land and premises, being my old Homestead Farm which I inherited from my father and at present in the tenure and occupation of my said son John, with all the buildings and improvements thereon," with half his other lands, exception a piece of swamp land. To his son Martin Romine, he devised "All my land where I now dwell, with the land adjoining the same which I purchased of John Earl", lying on both sides of Saddle River, "with the mills, Buildings and Improvements," with the half of his other lands, to take effect after the death of the widow.

John D. Romeyn (Romine), the elder son of Daniel Romine and to whom was devised the homestead farm of his grandfather Jan Romine in 1825, was then occupying the same in New Barbadoes Township as stated above. He continued therein and by his will dated 19 March 1853 and proved 16 April 1859, devised to his wife Sarah during widowhood also "two such rooms in the house where John Romeyn Oldis now lives, as she shall choose to occupy, with the privileges and advantages necessary and proper for enjoying the same," with provision for her maintenance.

To his daughter Rachel, the wife of James Brinckerhoff Jr., during her lifetime he devised the part of his homestead farm as marked with her name on a map thereof, by Garrett Van Dien in 1837, and on which part stood "the house where I now live," (107 acres) and after her death the same to her sons Daniel R., Henry I., and John R. Brinckerhoff.

- (a) Daniel Romine, bapt. 4 Aug. 1751 in the R.D. Ch. of Hackensack, son of Jan Romine and wife Catrina Kip, died 1825-1831, having mar. Margaret Roelofsen, by whom he had issue two sons, John D., b. 25 July 1777, and Martin. (Records of R.D. Ch. of Hackensack, Publ. 1891 in Vol. 1 of Collections Holland Soc. of N.Y., and History of the Kip family in America, publ. 1928, p. 151.)

To his grandson John Romeyn Oldis he devised the part of his lands "being the Homestead Lot whereon he now lives which lies between Saddle River Brook and the Public Road," containing some 109 acres, and a south lot of 15 acres, being the lots "Marked with the name of his mother Margaret Oldis,** now deceased, on the map of my Homestead Farm" previously cited. To his grandson Garret G. Oldis he left two lots of meadow pasture and woodland on the west side of the "New Road," 31 acres, formerly allotted to his mother, now deceased. To a granddaughter Ann Maria wife of Richard Terhune he left \$500 to be paid by the three grandsons Brinckerhoff, and to a granddaughter Sarah Brinckerhoff \$1000 likewise paid. His "long pew in the rear of the Elders' seat" in the Reformed Dutch Church in Hackensack he bequeathed to his wife Sarah during her lifetime and afterwards to his grandsons John R. Oldis and John R. Brinckerhoff, with a bequest of \$125 to the church. In a codicil dated 19 April 1855, testator devised \$500 to his granddaughter Catharine Oldis.

The 1837 map of the homestead farm mentioned in this will of John D. Romeyn shows a tract extending some four fifths of a mile northwestward from a frontage on "the public road to Hackensack," (now Maywood Avenue) with its northeast 109 acres allotted to Margaret wife of Garret Oldis and its southwest 107 acres to Rachel wife of James Brinckerhoff, and a house on each of the two tracts, near the said road. The former is the one here considered.

Subsequently, by deed of 2 May 1864, John R. Oldis grandson of John D. Romeyn and devisee of the upper half of the homestead farm in 1853, on which the former was living then, conveyed the same to Jacob A. Brinckerhoff, both parties being of New Barbadoes Township describing it as bounded east by a public road (Maywood Avenue), west by Saddle River Brook, south by land of John D. Romeyn, deceased, and including the house here considered, for \$12,668.50. This grantee died intestate leaving a widow and minor children in 1866 who by deeds of 30 March 1867 conveyed their interest in his estate to Isaac J. Brinckerhoff. But the premises were put up public auction on 25 January 1869 at the Hackensack House in Hackensack, by decree of the Chancery Court, sold to the same Isaac J. Brinckerhoff, highest bidder, for \$19,500, and conveyed to him by deed of 24 February following.

** Margaret Oldis, b. 13 May, bapt. 5 June 1797 in R.D. Ch. of Hackensack, dau. of John D. Romeyn and wife Sarah Van Giesen, d. before 1853 having mar. Garret Oldis and had issue: John R., Garret G. and Catharine Oldis.

N.J.
2 MAY 1900
3-

From Brinckerhoff and wife Harriet, the 97 acre tract passed by deed of 23 April 1887 to John G. Becker, all parties being of Midland Township (b), with exception of the part sold to the New Jersey Midland Railway Company in 1870, and Becker and wife conveyed the same by their deed of 29 December following to the Maywood Land and Improvement Company.

The last named corporation conveyed the same as one of three tracts of 97, 14 and 50 acres, with exceptions, to Henry Lindenmeyr of Bloomfield, Essex County, by deed of 25 March 1890, describing them as lying in the village of Maywood, and the first as having a frontage of 1180 feet on the northwest side of the "Public Road leading from the village of Hackensack to Paramus" and also on the northeast side of the intersecting public road leading therefrom to the Paterson-Hackensack Turnpike (respectively now Maywood and Central Avenues).

Lindenmeyr, of New York City, by his will of 15 June 1892, proved 19 October 1895, order certain real estate to be sold by his executors, and accordingly they conveyed back to the Maywood Land Company his half interest in the property here considered, by deed of 20 January 1897.

The Company then sold and conveyed the property to Ernst Bilhuber (c) of the Borough of Maywood, by deed of

(b) Midland Twp. created from New Barbadoes Twp. 1871.

(c) Mr. Ernst Bilhuber of Maywood, born in south of Germany 1849, came to N.Y.C. at 20 as designing and consulting engineer, became manager of the Maywood Art Tile Co. of Maywood, 1892, member of the Board of Education, member of Borough Council 1895 etc., and "bought for his home one of the old landmarks, the Brinckerhoff homestead, a substantial stone dwelling next to the present railroad station, and has greatly beautified the grounds and improved the house both in its exterior and interior, keeping strictly to the spirit and style of its original architecture. His residence has the appearance of a substantial old colonial homestead of which there are many fine specimens to be found in Bergen County worthy of preservation and study, (J.M. Van Valen, History of Bergen County, N.J., 1900, p. 329. See photo p. 331, captioned "Residence of Ernst Bilhuber.")

N.J.
2. Maywood
3-

17 February following, describing it as a plot having 515 feet frontage on the south side of Central Avenue and of 182 feet on the west side of Maywood Avenue, in the said borough. (d).

By deed of 1st September 1931, the grantee Ernst Bilhuber, abovenamed, widower, of the Borough of Maywood, conveyed the same property to Gertrude Bilhuber of 279 Maywood Avenue (the street address of the house here considered) and she remained as owner and occupant at the time of our survey thereof in March 1941.

Reference:

Search of the title in land and probate records of Bergen County by James Hanlon, H.A.B.S. abstractor, reported 15 April 1941.

Lewis D. Cook
Supervising Historian 9 May 1941

Approved:

Seymour Williams
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.
District Officer

(d) Borough of Maywood incorporated 1894 from Midland Township.